

In the Claims

1. **(Currently Amended)** An information handling system comprising:
a printed circuit board operable to support and interface information processing components;
plural information processing components, the information processing components disposed on the printed circuit board and at least one information processing component disposed distal the printed circuit board;
a cable extending from the distal information processing component and ending at a cable signal connector, the cable and signal connector operable to communicate information with the distal processing component;
a board signal connector mounted on the printed circuit board and coupled with the cable signal connector to communicate signals between the printed circuit board and the distal processing component; and
a protective housing coupled to the printed circuit board proximate to and separate from the board signal connector and the cable connector, the protective housing having an opening aligned to allow coupling of the cable and board signal connector, the opening having walls disposed proximate the signal connectors to absorb force applied at the signal connectors.
2. **(Original)** The information handling system of Claim 1 further comprising a second board signal connector mounted on the circuit board proximate the first board signal connector and wherein the protective housing further has a second opening aligned to allow coupling of a second cable signal connector to the second board signal connector, the second opening having walls disposed proximate the cable signal connector to absorb force applied at the second cable signal connector.
3. **(Original)** The information handling system of Claim 1 wherein the board signal connector comprises a Serial ATA connector.
4. **(Original)** The information handling system of Claim 3 wherein the Serial ATA

connector is coupled to the printed circuit board by solder electrical connections.

5. (Original) The information handling system of Claim 3 wherein the Serial ATA connector is coupled to the printed circuit board by board locks.

6. (Original) The information handling system of Claim 1 wherein the protective housing couples to the printed circuit board with parallel slots formed in the protective housing, the parallel slots accepting insertion of the printed circuit board.

7. (Original) The information handling system of Claim 6 further comprising a snap lock extending from the protective and aligned to engage the board connector after insertion of the printed circuit board into the parallel slots.

8. (Currently Amended) A method for securing a signal connector to a printed circuit board, the method comprising:

mounting the signal connector to the printed circuit board so that a mating connector inserts into the signal connector substantially at a right angle to the printed circuit board;

aligning a protective housing with the signal connector so that the signal connector inserts through an opening of the protective housing, the signal connector separate from the housing connector;

coupling the protective housing to the printed circuit board; ~~and~~

absorbing force applied at the signal connector with the protective housing;

inserting a mating connector into the signal connector, the mating connector separate from the protective housing; and

supporting the mating connector outer surface with the inner surface of the protective housing opening.

9. (Original) The method of Claim 8 wherein mounting the signal connector is soldering electrical connections of the signal connector to the printed circuit board.

10. (Original) The method of Claim 8 wherein mounting the signal connector further comprises mounting the signal connector to the printed circuit board with board locks.

11. (Original) The method of Claim 10 wherein the signal connector comprises a Serial ATA signal connector having a mating tongue extending parallel to the printed circuit board, the protective housing absorbing forces applied to the mating tongue perpendicular to the printed circuit board.

12. (Original) The method of Claim 8 wherein coupling the protective housing to the printed circuit board further comprises:

inserting the printed circuit board into slots of the protective housing so that force applied to the protective housing is absorbed at the printed circuit board; and locking the protective housing to the signal connector.

13. **Canceled.**

14. (Original) The method of Claim 13 wherein the signal connector comprises a Serial ATA signal connector having a mating tongue that inserts into a mating connector, the protective housing absorbing force applied by the mating connector to the signal connector..

15. (**Currently Amended**) A system for protecting a Serial ATA connector having a mounting tongue and a right-angle mount to a printed circuit board, the system comprising:
a Serial ATA connector adapted to right-angle mount to a printed circuit board; and
a housing separate from the Serial ATA connector and having openings on opposing sides, the openings sized to accept the Serial ATA connector from one side and a separate Serial ATA mated cable connector from the opposing side, the openings having an inner surface proximate the mated cable connector that restricts movement of the mated cable connector relative to the mounting tongue.

16. (Original) The system of Claim 15 wherein the housing further comprises first and second adjacent sets of opposing openings, each set of opposing openings sized to accept a Serial ATA connector from one side and a Serial ATA mated cable connector from the opposing side.

~~17. (Original) The system of Claim 15 wherein the Serial ATA connector is mounted~~

to the printed circuit board with soldered electrical attachments, the housing further comprising opposing key slots aligned to engage the printed circuit board to absorb force applied to the soldered electrical attachments.

18. (Original) The system of Claim 15 wherein the Serial ATA connector mounted to the printed circuit board with board locks.

19. (Original) The system of Claim 15 further comprising a snap lock integrated with the housing and operable to engage the Serial ATA connector to restrict movement of the housing relative to the Serial ATA connector.

20. (Original) The system of Claim 19 further comprising a mated cable connector operable to insert in the Serial ATA connector to communicate information from the printed circuit board to a hard disk drive.